

REMARKS

This Application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed January 27, 2006. All pending claims 1-45 were rejected in the Office Action. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending Claims 1-45.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objects to Claims 21 and 22 for having improper antecedent basis. Applicants have amended these claims, as suggested by the Examiner, to depend from Claim 19 instead of Claim 13. Therefore, reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 9, 20, 39, and 44 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended each of independent Claims 1, 13 and 41 to include the limitations of Claim 9 (or limitations analogous thereto), have amended independent Claim 28 to include the limitations of Claim 20, and have amended independent Claim 36 to include the limitations of Claim 39.

Section 102 Rejection

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-5, 13-17, 27, 36, 37, 41, and 42 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,183,361 issued to Cummings ("*Cummings*"). As noted above, independent Claims 1, 13, 36 and 41 have been amended to include the limitations of certain allowable dependent claims. Although Applicants believe these claims to be allowable in their original form, Applicants submit that these claims are at least allowable as amended. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claims 1, 13, 36 and 41, as well as the Claims 2-5, 14-17, 27, 37, and 42 which depend from these independent claims.

Section 103 Rejections

The Examiner rejects Claims 6, 7, 24, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cummings* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,830,064 issued to Bradish

(“*Bradish*”). The Examiner also rejects Claims 8 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cummings* in view *Bradish* and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,197,736 issued to Backus (“*Backus*”). Furthermore, the Examiner rejects Claims 10-12, 18, 19, 21-23, 34, 38, 40, 43, and 45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cummings* in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0184485 issued to Dray (“*Dray*”) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,747,139 issued to Taaeffe (“*Taaeffe*”). In addition, the Examiner rejects Claims 28-32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cummings* in view of *Dray*, *Taaeffe*, *Bradish* and *Backus*. Finally, the Examiner rejects Claims 33 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Cummings* in view of *Taaeffe*.

Claim 33-35 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, the rejection of these claims is now moot. Claim 28 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable dependent Claim 20. Although Applicants believe this claim to be allowable in its original form, Applicants submit that this claim is at least allowable as amended. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of Claim 28, as well as Claims 29-32, which depend from Claim 28. With respect to the remaining claims rejected above, Claims 6-8, 10-12, 18-19, 21-26, 38, 40, 43, and 45, these claims depend from one of independent Claims 1, 13, 36, and 41, which have been shown above to be in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of these claims.

CONCLUSION

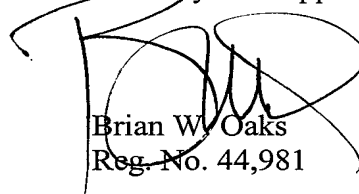
Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other reasons clearly apparent, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending claims.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the Examiner is invited to contact Brian W. Oaks, Attorney for Applicants, at the Examiner's convenience at (214) 953-6986.

Applicants hereby take an Extension of Time to file this Response due by April 27, 2006, with a one (1) month extension from April 27, 2006 to May 27, 2006. Because May 27, 2006 was a Saturday, May 28, 2006 was a Sunday, and May 29, 2006 was a holiday, this Response is timely filed with a one-month extension on May 30, 2006. Please charge a fee in amount of \$60.00 to cover the small entity fee for a one-month extension of time to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P. The Commissioner is also authorized to charge any other fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 02-0384 of BAKER BOTTS L.L.P.

Respectfully submitted,

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